

An Essay

on

Medical Etiquette

Respectfully Submitted to the

Faculty of the Homoeopathic

Medical College of Pennsylvania,

By

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And first of all I may observe
that it is much easier to lay
down rules for others, than
it is, to walk by them
ourselves, but inasmuch
as this subject has not
been exhausted by others
I will make a few remarks
with reference to it.

By the word Etiquette I mean
the general bearing and
demeanor of the physician,
in all his intercourse with
his fellow men in every
possible condition in life,
and under every circumstance
wherever he may be,
and whatever may be the
duties to which he may
be called,

First with regard to the
Physicians sphere of action,
in the performance of his
duties, he is called into
every possible condition
in life, from the highest
to the lowest, from the chamber
of the most virtuous to that
of the most vile.

he must visit the poor
as well as the rich
his duties are to relieve
the afflicted so far as he
has the power so to do,
whether his patients are good
or bad, whether virtuous
or vile, rich or poor
bond or free the true
physician is bound in consequence
of his calling to relieve all the suffering

and affliction of all those to whom
he is called,

There is no class in the
community which does not
look up to the physician if
he is a man of the proper bearing,
or if he extends to others the
same courtesy that he expects
others to extend to him,
now he may have very
much that is usefull stored
up against the time of need,
or he may be a man of
a great intellect, well posted
in all the medical theories
of the day, still if he does
not possess Medical Etiquette,
or a true manly bearing,
he cannot long fill his
sphere of action properly,

He may be very active in his
profession or he may even
be skillful in his practice,
But without the right bearing
or in other words without the
proper Etiquette he may not
for any great length of time
fill his place properly,
In the second place
we believe that God will
require of men just in
proportion to what they have,
or to what they might have,
so that if he has placed
us in a position in which
we can bless the community
in which we live,
that we are under great
obligations to him for conferring
such great blessings upon us,

we believe therefore that we
owe to him the most grateful
homage of our hearts and that
we should adore him with
all the powers that he has
given us, this is but our
reasonable service,
We now come in the third place
to speak of Medical Etiquette
with regard to our brethren
of the same fraternity,
and perhaps there is not any
where in all his professional
duties, that the true and
generous minded physician
displays more of the dignity
of his character and profession
than in this, and on the
other hand there is no place
no sphere of action no condition

in all his sphere or in all the
routine of medical duties where
he can and sometimes does
display more of the selfish,
more of the envious more of
that which is untrue or
even shameful. there are those
in the profession who never
have a good word to say
of any other physician,
especially those in their
vicinity, and if this were
all we might pass it
with this single remark,
that it does not show a
very generous spirit,
but this is not all, they
seem to take delight in
trying to build up a reputation
at the expense of the reputation

of others, such men are always
successful, they never lose
any of their patients whilst
their neighbours lose very many
now would it not be better
would it not answer a better
purpose, for every one to
speak the truth and
nothing but the truth
and indeed the truth is not
to be spoken at all times,
how much less, that which
is absolutely untrue,
however we have this
consolation that there are
very many who will
not descend to such a course,
that would disdain to speak
disdainfully of their brethren
of the same profession,

now it is not always those who
are the most successful who
blow the most,
we admit that it is the duty
of every physician to maintain
so far as he can the principles
that he believes to be in
accordance with truth
so far as his conscience
enlightened by experience,
approves, we would not expect
that the old school would
admit that the new school
is right and vice versa
for the new to admit that
the old school is right,
would be inconsistent in
the extreme, nevertheless
let us grant to others that
which we ask for ourselves

namely that we may be considered
honest in our opinions,
so grant to them that they
may though holding as we
believe principles utterly
unattainable, still perfect
honesty in their belief,
we love to see the most
enlarged charity extended
to others even to those with
whom we differ in our
views and opinions,
we remark in the fourth place,
that we owe this course to the
public, the public eye is upon
us, or upon the medical profession
now we admit that the minister
of religion is very highly esteemed
and so he should be,
by a portion of the community

and I hope a large portion,
still the influence of the
physician who can tell.
who but the doctor is told
with perfect confidence all
the secrets of domestic life;
now in view of the confidence
with which the greater
part of the community look to
him, and confide in him,
does he not owe much to the
public, so that both by
precept and example in
his professional character
and as a private citizen
to whom is entrusted both
health and happiness and as
there is no man in the
world to whom is confided,
so many of the secrets,

the trials and the troubles of
the afflicted as the physician,
if he is a man of moral
worth, a man of generous
sympathy, he will listen
to the tale of sorrow either
of body or of mind and will
minister so far as in him
lies to their relief,
he will not only administer
drugs for their diseases and
their ills, but he will speak
kind words he will give
them to understand that he
has a heart to sympathize
with them in their sorrow
and affliction, there are many
who might be much more
successfull if they would
display a little more sympathy,

in the last place we may
notice the claims of the
sick, and they are just in
proportion to the severity
and danger of their diseases,
and not in proportion to
their wealth, or influence,
the physician who appreciates
his patients according to their
wealth, is to be pitied,
for they cannot give
the satisfaction of an
approving conscience, that
is to be gained by works of
benevolence and mercy,
it is seldom that the faults
of the physician can be detected,
by any earthly tribunal,
but the most certain and
just tribunal awaits him,

where his conscience will
appease in the testimony,
adduced, the judge will not
ask, by what system of
treatment he discharged
his duties to his patients
neither will he be chargeable
for want of knowledge
for judged by this rule no
one could be punished in as
much, as all physicians
improve in skill by
experience, hence he may
regret his former deficiency
but he will not have
remorse of conscience,

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